**Professional Genre Step 1**

**Problem Statement / Literature Review**

**Problem statement:**

Recent research on marijuana has addressed issues of legalization of the substance. Whereas this assumption marijuana should be legalized has generated important research. A few studies have considered legalizing it, an issue, why marijuana is not legal yet is an issue I will explore in this article. According to Paul French” Cannabis comes from the Cannabis sativa plant, which grows naturally in Asia and Africa. The Neolithic Chinese used the plant's strong hemp fibers to make clothes and fishing nets, but many ancient civilizations, including the Chinese, Indians and Scythians, unlocked the hallucinogenic powers of the drug as they believed it would help them communicate with their gods”(2011). People have been using this substance for various reasons and in various ways. In ancient china they used cannabis for many medical reasons. For example, when woman were in labor they were given cannabis as a way to relax them. Cannabis was also prescribed by doctors for tooth aches, muscles relaxers, to ease the symptoms of constipation, female weakness, gout, malaria, rheumatism and absentmindedness etc. (2011).

Cannabis was and still is used different ways. People can smoke it (with or without tobacco), eat it, or drink it in tea to induce feelings of relaxation, happiness and laughter (2011). It comes in various forms such as bushy weeds, solid has or oil. Cannabis is also know by people as weed, dope, pot, ganja, refer, bud, wacky tobacco, joints, herb, Mary Jane, chronic, blunt, THC, smoke etc. Those are just some street names. Those names do not include the different types of cannabis there is.

Cannabis is the third most popular recreational drug in America. Alcohol is number one and tobacco is number two. Cannabis has been used by over 100million American alone. Different people have different reason for using cannabis. A lot of teens use cannabis because they see other people using it and they think it cool. For others, they are influenced by the music they listen to. People use it as a pain reliever. Others use it for a stress reliever. Most people use it because they like the way it makes them feel. They like the way it gives them a different perspective on life. Some people even said that the function better in school when they are under the influence.

What a lot of people do not understand, including myself, is why cannabis is not legalized? Cannabis is not a harmful drug. What is stopping the government from legalizing marijuana? In this article I will address those questions and more.

**Literature Review**

Some research has suggested that cannabis should be legalized, while others think otherwise. For example Doug Fine says there is no rational explanation to why something as valuable as hemp - which other countries are making so much money off and importing to us - why we’re not growing this by the millions of acres (2013). After hearing Fine talk about commercial hemp, Edit Treadwell, who is sponsored by Southwest Seniors, said “The amount of money that this country spends fighting something that we know now is a losing battle seems ridiculous we need jobs, and if this industry was developed, that would be beneficial (2013)." But these studies have not addressed why cannabis is still illegal. In this article it just talked about what Doug Fines thought on legalizing marijuana are.

The state is worried about finding jobs for fellow Americans, in this article “Marijuana Legalization Boosts BC Hydroponics Business” it talks about how The ballot initiatives passed last November in Washington state and Colorado allow adults over the age of 21 to possess up to 28 grams of marijuana (2013). With those law passed it is legal for those states to grow and sell cannabis. Green Planet Wholesale Ltd is now multi-million-dollar businesses now employ about 60 people. If they legalize cannabis the legalization while open will thousands or even millions of jobs for Americans throughout the country. Then maybe the United States won’t be in so much debt. But these studies have not addressed how many people have been arrested due to marijuana.

The state is complaining about not having enough room in the prisons because there are too many people getting arrested for use and possession of marijuana. In this article “The Marijuana Policy “, it states that in the year 2011 the FBI arrested 750,000 for Simple Marijuana Possession. If marijuana was legalized 750,000 people will be out of jail. Since 1990, nearly 5.9 million Americans have been arrested on marijuana charges, a greater number than the entire populations of Alaska. The prison will not be over crowded. The government will not be closing valuable things just to have money to build more prisons. In this article it did not explain how cannabis is not a harmful substance.

In this article “Legalization of Marijuana” it states how marijuana does not cause brain damage, genetic damage, or damage the immune system. Unlike alcohol, marijuana does not kill brain cells or induce violent behavior. In this article it also compared marijuana to other drugs as shown below. According to the chart below marijuana does not cause any deaths at all. But yet it is still illegal. Marijuana does not cause serious health problems like those caused by tobacco or alcohol (e.g., strong addiction, cancer, heart problems, birth defects, emphysema, liver damage, etc.). Death from a marijuana overdose is impossible. In all of world history, there has never been a single human death attributed to a health problem caused by marijuana. Legalize marijuana and life would be better for most people (2010).

**ANNUAL AMERICAN DEATHS CAUSED BY DRUGS**

TOBACCO …………………… 400,000

ALCOHOL …………………… 100,000

ALL LEGAL DRUGS ………….20, 000

ALL ILLEGAL DRUGS ……….15, 000

CAFFEINE …………………….2, 000

ASPIRIN ………………………500

MARIJUANA …………………. 0

**Proposed to the problem**

In order to address the problem of legalizing marijuana, I will use different articles and interviews which others have used before me. Applying this approach is appropriate because it will give different viewpoint from different people and their point of views. For example a viewpoint from different senators, some viewpoints that wants to legalize marijuana and some that wants to keep marijuana illegal. To do this I will first research different senator’s viewpoints on marijuana. Then I will decide which ones are going to be good for my project, and finally I will finish my project.

I could also interview people that smoke and/or eat marijuana to see what they get out of using the substance. I will come up with a variety of questions to ask each person. I will ask each person the same questions to see if they have different reason for why they use this drug. I will ask questions like why did you start using marijuana? If what ways do you use the drug? Do you smoke it, drink it and/or eat it?

I could also interview people that don’t use the drug. I would come up with a different set of questions to ask those people. For example I would ask them have they ever used marijuana. If so in what way? Why don’t you use marijuana anymore? What made you start using marijuana in the first place? The answers I get from those different groups of people will give me a look into how other people feel about marijuana. It will also give me a thought onto how they think about marijuana being legalized

**Results/Findings**

Throughout all the research that was done to complete this project, the answers to the questions I have can be answered. The question was “Why was marijuana legalized in the first place?” There are a lot of different answers to the one question. According to Karen O’keefe, assistant Director of State Policies Marijuana Policy Project, says it’s the governments fault. “The government and politicians have refused to listen to many government commissions that over the past hundreds of years said that marijuana should not be criminalized.” If the government would have listened marijuana would never had been legalized in the first place.

According to Mason Tvert, the executive director of Safer says it is the assumption of people. “Marijuana is illegal because there is a perception of harm behind it. People think it is so harmful that it must remind illegal for all people to use.” But little do people know marijuana is NOT a harmful drug. There is not document that every said that marijuana made not one single person hospitalized. There is no document that ever said that marijuana caused any deaths. According to that chart on page 4, marijuana has zero.

Mark Krawite, who is the director of Outreach and Veterans for Medical Marijuana Access, had something to say about this topic also. Krawite says “it is pretty clear as to why marijuana was illegal because when you look back to the historical record of the reefer madness days. It was total racism and immigration.” Different people have different opinions as to why marijuana is illegal.

Most people in the world think there is no reason why marijuana is illegal. Everyone has their different opinions to why they think what they think. What I do not understand is since the substance has no history of doing any harm to people why is illegal? I know I am not the only one that what to know the answer to that question. Hopefully the government will legalized the substance and this argument will be over.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the research I accomplished to complete this project, different questions came up that I didn’t get a chance to get answered. For example, if marijuana ever becomes legal what would happen? Since other drugs that are not illegal, such as alcohol, have been documented of hospitalizing people and caused people deaths, why are they not illegal? Those are just some questions that came to my mind while I was completing this project. Hopefully one day those questions I have will get answered.